

even mentioned the White House in one of her songs. Since I don't have a band right here and since I can't sing—[*laughter*—I'll just say the words, and you can imagine Loretta singing them, "The White House social season should be glittering and gay, but here in Topeka the rain is a-falling, the faucet is a-dripping, and the kids are a-bawling"—[*laughter*—"one of them a-toddling, and one is a-crawling, and one's on the way." [*Laughter*]

Many of Loretta Lynn's songs are about the challenges, the dreams, and the joys of everyday life. She's known them all, and she has sung about them with style and feeling. More than four decades after she first sang at the Grand Ole Opry, there is no better known voice in country music and no lady more admired than Loretta Lynn.

Her song and the film "Coal Miner's Daughter" tell a true story that began in Butcher Hollow, Kentucky. Loretta grew up believing, in her words, that "from the Holler down to the mine was the whole world."

Her world changed when she met a soldier named Mooney Lynn. He made a strong impression on people. See, Mooney was the kind of man who wore a cowboy hat with a label inside that said, "Like hell it's yours." [*Laughter*] But as Loretta remembers, "I wasn't scared of Mooney. He was real nice. I was scared because I had never seen a car before." [*Laughter*] They married and moved away and were living in the State of Washington when Mooney got an idea. He knew that the voice singing lullabies to their children was better than any he had ever heard from a jukebox or in a saloon. And just maybe if Loretta cut a record, radio stations might play it.

That notion has been proven correct in more than 70 record albums, 27 number one singles, and 80 chart hits, from "Coal Miner's Daughter" to "Love is the Foundation" to "Don't Come Home A Drinkin' With Lovin' on Your Mind." [*Laughter*]

Loretta has received every top honor in country music and is loved for her own songs and for her wonderful duets with the late Conway Twitty. Her appeal has been explained this way, "She's straightforward, down home, innocent, and perfectly charming. Everyone loves her." And this evening,

that unanimous opinion is expressed once again, and the Nation pays tribute to Loretta Lynn.

Americans are grateful to these Kennedy Center honorees because you have all given us wonderful memories. You have given your peers a high mark to aim for. Each of you in your own way has given America a body of work that reflects so very well on our Nation. Thank you for contributions to America. May God continue to bless you. Thank you for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:05 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to musician Bonnie Raitt.

Presidential Determination on Waiver of Conditions on Obligation and Expenditure of Funds for Planning, Design, and Construction of a Chemical Weapons Destruction Facility in Russia

December 6, 2003

Presidential Determination No. 2004-10

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Presidential Determination on Waiver of Conditions on Obligation and Expenditure of Funds for Planning, Design, and Construction of a Chemical Weapons Destruction Facility in Russia

Consistent with the authority vested in me by section 1306 of the Department of Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2004 (Public Law 108-136) (the "Act"), I hereby certify that waiving the conditions described in section 1305 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000 (Public Law 106-65) is important to the national security interests of the United States, and include herein, for submission to the Congress, the statement, justification, and plan described in section 1306 of the Act.

You are authorized and directed to transmit this determination, including the statement, justification, and plan to the Congress and to arrange for publication of this determination in the *Federal Register*.

George W. Bush

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 8.

Remarks on Signing the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act of 2003

December 8, 2003

Good morning. Thanks for the warm welcome. In a few moments I will have the honor of signing an historic act of Congress into law. I'm pleased that all of you are here to witness the greatest advance in health care coverage for America's seniors since the founding of Medicare.

With the Medicare Act of 2003, our Government is finally bringing prescription drug coverage to the seniors of America. With this law, we're giving older Americans better choices and more control over their health care, so they can receive the modern medical care they deserve. With this law, we are providing more access to comprehensive exams, disease screenings, and other preventative care, so that seniors across this land can live better and healthier lives. With this law, we are creating Health Savings Accounts. We do so so that all Americans can put money away for their health care tax-free.

Our Nation has the best health care system in the world, and we want our seniors to share in the benefits of that system. Our Nation has made a promise, a solemn promise to America's seniors. We have pledged to help our citizens find affordable medical care in the later years of life. Lyndon Johnson established that commitment by signing the Medicare Act of 1965. And today, by reforming and modernizing this vital program, we are honoring the commitments of Medicare to all our seniors.

The point man in my administration on this issue was Secretary Tommy Thompson, and he and his team did a fabulous job of working with the Congress to get this important piece of legislation passed. Tommy, I want to thank you for your leadership.

This bill passed the Congress because of the strong leadership of a handful of Members, starting with the Speaker of the House, Denny Hastert. Mr. Speaker was joined by Senator Bill Frist, the Senate majority leader

of the Senate, in providing the leadership necessary to get this bill done. I want to thank you both.

I appreciate the hard work of the House majority leader, Tom DeLay, in seeing that this bill was passed. I also appreciate the hard work of the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, Chairman Bill Thomas, for his good work. The chairman of the Finance Committee in the Senate, Senator Chuck Grassley, did a noble job, and he was joined in this task by the ranking member of the Finance Committee, Senator Max Baucus of Montana.

And the entire Senate effort was boosted by the efforts of a man from Louisiana, Senator John Breaux. And speaking about Louisiana, Billy Tauzin of the House of Representatives did great work on this bill. Senator Orrin Hatch from Utah made a significant contribution. Nancy Johnson, the House Member from Connecticut, did a great job. Mike Bilirakis from Florida worked hard on this piece of legislation. I want to thank all the other Members of the Congress and the Senate who have joined us. Thank you all for taking time out of your busy schedules to share in this historic moment.

I appreciate Tom Scully, the Administrator of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, for his good work. The Director of the CDC, Julie Gerberding, is with us today. Julie, thank you for coming. The Food and Drug Administration Commissioner, Mark McClellan, is here. Jo Anne Barnhart, the Commissioner of the Social Security Administration, is with us. Thank you for coming, Jo Anne. Kay James, who is the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, is with us. Thank you for coming, Kay.

A lot of this happened—this bill happened because of grassroots work. A lot of our fellow citizens took it upon themselves to agitate for change, to lobby on behalf of what's right. We had some Governor support around the country. Governor Craig Benson from New Hampshire is with us today. Governor, thank you for coming.

But the groups that speak for the elderly did fantastic work on this legislation. See, there was a lot of pressure not to get something done—for the wrong reasons, I might add. But Bill Novelli, the CEO of AARP,